

SYNOPSIS.

Fran arrives at Hamilton Gregory's home in Littleburg, but finds him absent conducting the choir at a camp meeting. She repairs thither in search of him, laughs during the service and is asked to leave. Abbott Ashton, superintendent of schools, escorts Fran from the tent. He tells her Gregory is a wealthy man, deeply interested in charity work, and a pillar of the church. Ashton becomes greatly interested in Fra. and while taking leave of her, holds her hand and is seen by Sapphira Clinton, sister of Robert Clinton, chairman of the school board. Fran tells Gregory she wants a home with him. Grace Neir, Gregory's private secretary, takes a violent dislike to Fran and advises her to go away at once. Fran hints at a twenty-year-old secret. And Gregory in agitation asks Grace to leave the room. Fran relates the story of how Gregory married a young girl at Springfield while attending college and then deserted her. Fran is the child of that marriage. Gregory had married his present wife three years before the death of Fran's mother. Fran as the daughter of a very dear friend who is dead. Fran agrees to the story Mrs. Gregory insists on her making her home with them and takes her to her arms. Fran declares the secretary must got Grace begins nagging tactics in an effort to drive Fran from the Gregory home. Abbott, while taking a walk alone at midnight, finds Fran on a bridge telling her fortune by cards. She tells Abbott that she is the famous lion tamer. Fran Sought a home. Grace tells of seeing Fran come home after midnight with a man. She guesses part of the story and surprises the rest from Abbott. She decided to investigate Fran's story Fran enlists Abbott in her battle amainst Grace. Fran offers her services to Gregory as secretary during the temporary absence of Grace. The latter, hearing of Fran's purpose, returns and interrupts a touching scene between father and daughter. Fran goes fishing with Mrs. Gregory's brother. Abbott, whose retention as superintendent, is to be decided that day, finds her sitting alo

CHAPTER XV .- Continued.

She slipped her hand into his. "Didn't I have a mother? Oh, these mothers! And who can make motherwishes come true? Well! And you just studied with all your might; and you'll keep on and on, till you're . would have suited your mother, too." sorry for it, But her religious ideals-" She withdrew her hand.

"My mother would have loved you," declared, for he did not understand. for strange young ladies who train lions.

"Mine would you," Fran asserted. with more reason.

Abbott, conscious of a dreadful emptiness, took Fran's hand again. "I'll mever be out of your reach, Fran."

She did not seek to draw away, but said, with dark meaning, "Remember the bridge at midnight."

"I remember how you looked, with the moonlight silvering your face-you were just beautiful that night, little Nonparetl.

"My chin is so sharp," she murmured.

"Yes," he said, softly feeling the warm little fingers, one by one, as if to make sure all were there. "That's the way I like it-sharp."

"And I'm so ridiculously thin-" "You're nothing like so thin as when you first came to Littleburg," he declared. "I've noticed how you are-have been-I mean .

"Filling out?" cried Fran gleefully. "Oh, yes, and I'm so glad you know. because since I've been wearing long dresses, I've been afraid you'd never find it out, and would always be thinking of me as you saw me at the beginning. But I am-yes-filling out."

"And your little feet, Fran-"Yes, I always had a small foot. But let's get off of this subject."

"Not until I say something about your smile oh, Fran, that smile!" "The subject, now," remarked Fran,

"naturally returns to Grace Noir." "Please, Fran!" "I'll tell you why you hurt my feel-

ings, Abbott. You've disappointed me twice. Oh, if I were a man, I'd show any meek-faced little hypocrite if she could prize secrets out of me. Just M. because it wears dresses and long hair, you think it an angel."

"Meaning Miss Grace, 1 presume?" remarked Abbott dryly. "But what is the secret, this time?" "Didn't I trust you with the secret

that I mean' to apply for the position of secretary as soon as Grace Noir was out of the way? And I was just about to win the fight when here she came-hadn't been to the city at all, because you told her what I meant to do-handed her the secret, like a child doesn't a father, who's always talking giving up something it doesn't want."

her your plan. I don't know how she father draw his daughter to his breast found it out."

'From you; nobody else knew it." "She did not learn it from me" "-And that's what gets me!-you

tell her everything, and don't even know you tell. Just hypnotized! Anewer my questions: the morning after I told you what I meant to do-standing there at the fence by the gateconfiding in you, telling you everything-I say the next morning, didn't you tell Grace Noir all about it?" "Certainly not."

Abbott tried to remember, then said casually, "I believe we did meet on the street that morning."

"Yes," said Fran ironically, "I be-

JOHN BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS ILLUSTRATIONS BY O · IRWIN · MYERS (COPYRIGHT 1912 BOBBS-MERRILL CO.)

course she engaged you in her pecul- her closer, and stroked her hair ten- Aid would give chicken pie dinners common tie of religioniar style of inquisitorial conversation?" 'We went down the street together."

"Now, prisoner at the bar, relate all that was said while going down the and rested it on the back of the seatstreet together,

"Most charming, but unjust judge. not a word that I can remember, so it couldn't have been of any interest I did tell her that since she-yes, I remember now-since she was to be out of town all day, I would wait until tomorrow to bring her a book she wanted to borrow."

"Oh! And she wanted to know who told you she would be out of town all day, didn't she?"

Abbott reflected deeply, then said with triumph, "Yes, she did. She asked me how I knew she was going to the city with Bob Clinton. And I merely said that it was the understanding they were to select the church music. Not another word was said on the subject."

"That was enough. Mighty neat. As soon as she saw you were trying to avoid a direct answer, she knew I'd teld you. That gave her a clew to my leaving the choir practice before the rest of them. She guessed something important was up. Well, Abbott, you are certainly an infant in her hands. but I guess you can't help it."

Self-pride was touched, and he retaliated: "Fran, I hate to think of your being willing to take her position behind her back." She crimsoned

"You'd know how I feel about it," he went on, "if you understood her better. I know her duty drives her out of my reach, of course. Which to act in opposition to you, and I'm

"Abbott, be honest and answer-is you, Abbott Ashton." there anything in it-this talk of doing God's will? Can people love God so well as Fran, about mothers' liking and hate one another? I just hate ing important to tell me that I don't shams," she went on, becoming more excited. "I don't care what fine names ory history from old Mrs. Jefferson, you give them-whether it's marriage. or education, or culture, or religion, if there's no heart in it, it's a sham, and I hate it. I hate a lie. But a thousand times more, do I hate a life that is a lie."

> "Fran, you don't know what you are saying."

> "Yes I do know what I'm saying, Is religion going to church? That's all I can see in it. I want to believe there's something else, I've honestly searched. for I wanted to be comforted, I tell you, I need it. But I can't find any comfort in mortar and stained-glass windows. I want somerhing that makes a man true to his wife, and makes a family live together in blessed harmony, something that's good on the streets and in the stores, something that makes people even treat a show-girl well. If there's anything in it, why doesn't father-"

> She snatched away her hand that she might cover her face, for she had burst into passionate weeping. 'Why



She Had Burst Into Passionate Weep-

- 2 H SYM MWHLA

about religion, and singing about it, You are very unjust. I did not tell and praying about it-why doesn't that . close, close to his heart-that's

the only home she ask: for-that's the home she has a right to, yes a right, I don't care how far she's wandered-" "Fran!" cried Abbott, in great dis-

"Don't cry, little one!" had no intelligent word, but his arm was full of meaning as it slipped about her. "Who has been unkind to you. Nonpareil?" She let her head sink upon his shoulder, as she sobbed without restraint. "What shams have pierced your pure heart? Am I the him, religion meant Wainut Street cause of any of these tears? Am 1?"

"Yes," Fran answered, between her sobs, "you're the cause of all my happy tears." She nestled there with any use. The Sunday-school would lieve you did meet somewhere. Of a movement of perfect trust; he drew have button contests, or the Ladies'

derly, trusting himself.

eyes and a faint smile came into the "Sometimes I seem so strange that present." I need an introduction to myself." She looked into Abbott's eyes fleetingly, and drew in the corners of her mouth. "I guess, after all, there's something in religion!"

Abbott was so warmed by returning sunshine that his eyes shone. "Dear Fran!" he said-it was very hard to keep his arm where she had put it. She tried to look at him steadily, but somehow the light hurt her eyes. She could feel its warmth burning her cheeks

"Oh, Fran," cried Abbott impulsively, "the bridge in the moonlight was nothing to the way you look now so beautiful—and so much more than just beautiful

"This won't do." Fran exclaimed, hiding her face. "We must get back to Grace Noir immediately."

"Oh, Fran, oh. no, please!" "I won't please. While w 're in Sure-Enough Country, I mean to tell you the whole truth about Grace Neir." The hame seemed to settle the atmos-

phere-she could look at him, now "I want you to understand that something is going to happen-must happen, just from the nature of things. and the nature of wives and husbands -and the other woman. Oh. you needn't frown at me, I've seen you look that other way at me, so I know

"Fran! Then you know that !--" "No, you must listen. know. I've found out the whole Gregwithout her knowing that she was telling anything-she's a sort of 'Protessor Ashton' in my hands-and I mean to tell you that history. You know that, for about three years, Mrs. Gregory hasn't gone to church-"

"You must admit that it doesn't appear well.

"Admit it? Yes, of course I must And the world cares for appearances, and not for the truth. That's why it condemns Mrs. Gregory-and me-and that's why I'm afraid the school 'word will condemn you; just on account of appearances. For these past three years, the church has meant to Mrs. bregory, a building plus Grace Noir don't mean that Mrs. Gregory got jealous of Grace Noir-I don't know how to explain-you can't handle cobwebs without marring them." She paused.

"Jealous of Miss Grace!" exclaimed Abbott reprovingly.

"Let's go back, and take a running ump right into the thick of it. When Mr. Gregory came to Littleburg, a complete stranger-and when he married, she was a devoted church-member-always went, and took great interest in all his schemes to help jolks -folks at a distance, you understand

She just devoured that religlous magazine he edits-yes, I'll admit, his religion shows up beautifully in print; the pictures of it are good, too. Old Mrs. Jefferson took pride in being wheeled to church where she could see her son-in-law leading the music, and where she'd watch every gesture of the minister and careft the sound of his voice at the high places. where he cried and, or nevertheless Sometimes Mrs. Jefferson could get a lozen ands and buts out of one discourse. Then comes your Grace Noir.

Abbott listened with absorbed attertion. It was impossible not to be influenced by the voice that had grown to mean so much to him.

"Grace Noir is a person that's superhumanly good, but she's not happy in her goodness; it hurts her, all the time, because other folks are not as good as she. You can't live in the house with her without wishing she'd performed in the city chamber. make a mistake to show herself human, but she never does, she's always right. She's so fixed on being a mar- needy adventurers with titles real or tyr, that if nobody crosses her, she just makes herself a martyr out of the shortcomings of others."

"As for instance—?" "As for instance, she suffered martyrdom every time Mrs. Gregory nestlet in an arm-chair beside the cozy hearth, when a Ladies' Aid, or a Rally was beating its way through snowdrifts to the Walnut Street church. Mr. Gregory was like everybody else about Grace-he took her at her own value, and that gave the equation: to the girl, and she has no remedy. Some church plus Grace Noir. For a while, Mrs. Gregory clung to church-going with grim determination, but it wasn't

down town, and Mrs. Gregory would rights, lifted his arm from about her, she would have her pie; but she was shook back her hair and raised her husband and his secretary that understood the Lord. Somehow she seemed

"Fran, you do not realize that your words-they intimate-'

"She disturbed conditions, Abbott She was like a turned-up light at a the crash will come." seance. Mr. Gregory was appalled because his wife quit attending church Grace sympathized in his sorrow It made him feel toward Grace Notrbut I'm up against a stone wall, Abbott, I haven't the word to describe his feeling, maybe there isn't any.

"Fran Nonpareil! Such wisdom terrifles me . . . such suspicions!" In this moment of hesitancy between conviction and rejection, Abbott felt oddly out of harmony with his little friend. She realized the effect she must necessarily be producing, yet she must continue; she had counted the cost and the danger. If she did not convince him, his thought of her could neve, be the same.

"Abbott, you may think I am talking from jealousy, and that I tried to get rid of Grace Noir so I could better my condition at her expense. I don't know how to make you see that my story is true. It tells itself. Oughtn't that to prove it? Mrs. Gregory has the dove's nature; she'd let the enemy have the spoils rather than come to blows. She lets him take his choicehere is she, yonder's the secretary. He isn't worthy of her if he chooses Grace-but his hesitation has proved him unworthy, anyhow. The old lady her mother-is a fighter; she'd have driven out the secretary long ago. But Mrs. Gregory's idea seems to be-'ir he can want her, after I've given him myself, I'll not make a movement to interfere."

Abbott played delicately with the mere husk of this astounding revelation: "Have you talked with old Mrs. Jefferson about—about it?"

"She's too proud-wouldn't admit it. But I've shyly hinted however. it's not the sort of story you could pour through the funnel of an eartrumpet without getting wheat mixed with chaff. She'd misunderstand-the ighbors would get it first-anyway she wouldn't make a move because her daughter won't. It's you and I, Abbott, against Grace and Mr. Gregory." He murmured, looking away, "You you?" take me for granted, Fran."

"Yes." Fran's reply was almost a whisper. A sudden terror of what he might think of her, smote her heart. But she repeated bravely, "Yes!"

He turned, and she saw in his eyes hedge her soul about. "And you can always take me for granted, Fran; and always is a long time." "Not too long for you and me," said

Fran, looking at him breathlessly. "I may have felt," he said, "for some

time, in a vague way, what you have



told me. Of course it is evident that he prefers Miss Noir's society. But I have always thought-or hoped-or wanted to feel, that it was only the

Presently she pulled herself to be a red button or a blue button, and clung to. Abbott, but appearances. As "It was not the truth that you for me, let truth kill rather than live always third-in her home, or at as a sham. If Grace Noir stays, the a friendly compromise. Then she church, she was the third. It was her worst is going to happen. She may not know how far she's going. He rosy face. "I'm so funny." she declared. to disturb conditions, merely by being People can make anything they want may not suspect he's doing wrong. seem right in their own eyes. But I've found out that wickedness isn't stationary, it's got a sort of perpetual motion. If we don't drive Grace away,

"Fran-how you must love Mrs. Gregory!"

"She breaks my heart."

"Dear faithful Fran! What can we do?—I say we, Fran, observe." "Oh, you Abbott Ashton . . . just

what I thought you! No. no, you mustn't interrupt. I'll manage Grace Noir, if you'll manage Bob Clinton."

Where does Bob Clinton come in ?" "Grace is trying to open a door so he can come in. I mean a secret in Mr. Gregory's past. She suspects that there's a secret in his past, and she intends to send Bob to Springfield where Mr. Gregory left that secret. Bob will bring it to Littleburg. He'll hand it over to Grace, and then she'll have Mr. Gregory in her powerthere'll be no getting her hands off him, after that."

"Surely you don't mean that Mr. Gregory did wrong when he was young, and that Miss Noir suspects

"Bob will bring home the secretand it will kill Mrs. Gregory Abbott -and Grace will go off with him-i know how it'll end."

"What is this secret?" "You are never to know, Abbott." 'Very well-so be it. But I don't believe Mr. Gregory ever did very

wrong-he is too good a man." "Isn't he daily breaking his wife's heart?" retorted Fran with a curl of

the lip. "I call that murder." "But still!--But I can't think he realizes it."

"Then," said Fran satisfically, "we'll just call it manslaughter. When I think of his wife's meek patient face -don't you recall that look in her eyes of the wounded deer-and the thousands of times you've seen those two together, at church, on the street, in the library-everywhere seeing only each other, leaning closer,

smiling deeper-as if doing good meant getting close-Oh, Abbott, you know what I mean-don't you, don't

"Yes!" cried Abbott sharply, "Fran, you are right. I have been-all of us have been-clinging to appearances. Yes, I know what you mean.

"You'll keep Bob Clinton from tell ing that secret, won't you? He's to go confiding trust that seemed to tonight, on the long journey-tonight, after the board meeting. It'll take him three or four days. Then he'll come back

"But he'll never tell the secret." Ab bott declared. His mouth closed as by a spring.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



MARRIAGE LAW IN ITALY

Ceremony is Only Legal When Performed by Mayor of Place Where Couple Reside.

In Italy marriage by law is a civil contract, only legal when performed by the mayor of the place in which the couple who desire to be married reside, or his assessor, and it must be

Some hotels and not a few pensions in Rome are the constant resort of spurious to their names, Duke This and Prince That, who are always on the lookout for money, says the Christian Herald. Aided, it may be, by some one in the hotel or pension, they get acquainted with a rich American family with marriageable daughters. To one of these love is made and mar-

riage is arranged. Such have no difficulty in finding a priest to perform their ceremony. It is done. Then the adventurer deserts few years ago a young girl was so dance before midnight? treated. Her pseudo husband, having secured her money, left her and mar- 11:30 tonight it will be a year since ried civilly and legally an Italian my husband's death. I must honor woman with whom he was in love. his memory properly, and not dance

trayer and his wife. Recognizing the provocation she had received, she was left unpunished. Another girl similarly betrayed committed suicide.

Legal Opinion.

"A cat cits on my back fence every night and he yowls and yowls and yowls. Now, I don't want to have any trouble with neighbor Jones, but this thing has gone far enough, and I want you to tell me what to do."

The young lawyer looked as solemn as an old sick owl, and said not a word. "I have a right to shoot the cat.

haven't 1?" "I would hardly say that," replied

young Coke Blackstone. "The cat does not belong to you, as I understand it." "No, but the fence does." "Then," concluded the light of law, I think it safe to say you have a per-

New York Press. Her Grief. He-Why don't you give me

fect right to tear down the fence."-

Young Widow-Well, you see at The victimized girl shot dead her be until after the year is up.

"'TWOULD BE SWEET TO DIE"

Thought This Lady, While Under-going Frightful Experience, Here Told First Time.

Linn, W. Va .- "There is no doubt but that my life was saved by the use of Cardul, the woman's tonic," says Mrs. Abbie Shackleford, of this town, "Before using Cardui, I was very bad off-would have nervous and shaking spells through my entire body, terrible sick headaches, and would find myself gasping for breath. I often thought during those trying times that it would be sweet to die.

I took many different medicines and treatments, but they did me no good. got weaker and weaker every day.

Finally, I decided to try Cardui and got two bottles. I was certainly greatly surprised to note the quick change for the better, after taking only onethird of the first bottle. The shaky spells and sick headache have entirely disappeared. Can now walk one mile to church and back, and not feel tired.

Cardul also proved a blessing to my oldest daughter. Everyone thought she had appendicitis, on account of a bad pain in her side, but Cardul brought her back to good health.

I will never be without Cardul in the house."

Cardui will surely do for you, what has done for so many thousands of other women. It will help you.

Get a bottle at the drug store, today. N. B. - Write to: Ladies' Advisory Dept., Chatta-nooga Medicine Co., Chattanooga, Tenn., for Stecial Instructions, and 64-page book, Horne Treat-ment for Women," sent in plain wrapper, on

Uncomplimentary. "I've a half mind to tell you what think of you!" snorted Mr. Blob-

bins. "Umph!" replied Mr. Swatley, "Half mind is what you were born

MOTHER! LOOK AT CHILD'S TONGUE

If cross, feverish, constipated. give "California Syrup of Figs"

A laxative today saves a sick child tomorrow. Children simply will not take the time from play to empty their bowels, which become clogged up with waste, liver gets sluggish; stomach

Look at the tongue, mother! If coated, or your child is listless, cross, feverish, breath bad, restless, doesn't eat heartily, full of cold or has sore throat or any other children's ailment, give a teaspoonful of "California Syrup of Figs," then don't worry, because it is perfectly harmless, and in a few hours all this constipation poison, sour bile and fermenting waste will gently move out of the bowels, and you have a well, playful child again. A thorough "inside cleansing" is oftimes all that is necessary. It should be the first treatment given in any sickness.

Beware of counterfeit fig syrups. Ask at the store for a 60-cent bottle of "California Syrup of Figs," which has full directions for babies, children of all ages and for grown-ups plainly printed on the bottle. Adv.

Accommodating. "Drink to me only with thine eyes." 'All right; here's looking at you!"-Baltimore American

In Winter 'e-ru-na CATARRH TONIC For COUGHS & COLDS MR. Samuel McKinley, 1215 Grand Ave., Kansas City. Mo., writes: "I can honestly say that I owe my life to Peruna. Traveling from town to town, and having to go into all kinds

of badly heated buildings, plying my trade as auctioneer, it is only natural that I had colds fre-"Last December I contracted a severe cold which, through neglect on my part, settled on my chest. I heard of Peruna.

cured me, so I cannot praise too highly." Those who prefer tablets to quid medicines can now procure eruna in tablet form.

The Wretchedness of Constipation

Can quickly be overcome by CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS. Purely vegetable

act surely and gently on the liver. Cure

Dizziness, and Indigestion. They do their duty. SMALL PILL, SMALL DOSE, SMALL PRICE. Genuine must bear Signature

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